DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 342 065 EA 023 597

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TITLE Home Schooling: Political, Historical, and Pedagogical Perspectives. Social and Policy Issues in Education: The University of Cincinnati Series.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-89391-706-0
PUB DATE 91
NOTE 224p.
AVAILABLE FROM Ablex Publishing Corporation, 355 Chestnut Street, Norwood, NJ 07648 ($24.50).
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Compulsory Education; *Court Litigation; Elementary Secondary Education; Family Influence; *Home Schooling; Ideology; Parent School Relationship; *Public Education; School Choice; *School Law; *State Legislation

ABSTRACT

Although their perspectives differ, this volume's contributors agree that the home schooling movement offers an intriguing critique of traditional education. While nationally publicized school improvement measures call for increased bureaucratization, professionalism, and standardization, a growing number of families are choosing to forego traditional schooling altogether. This volume places these families' experiences within the broader framework of current debates over pedagogy, the organization and control of schooling, and the feasibility of pluralism in the common school. The first section, which contains chapters 1-4, concentrates on the parents and children learning at home. The first chapter summarizes home schooling demographics, and the second chapter treats home-schooled children's academic and social development. The next chapter presents qualitative vignettes of different home schooling populations--the ideologues and the pedagogues. Chapter 4 analyzes day-to-day interactions of children and adults in home schools. Part II, which contains chapters 5-8, discusses the significance of the home schooling movement. Chapter 5 analyzes trends in state regulation against the backdrop of increased parental choice in education. Chapter 6 critiques the individualist philosophy underlying home education and decries the loss of social reform through public schooling. Chapter 7 attributes this loss of faith in the secular mission of public schooling to the changing relationships among family, state, and school. The final chapter offers a comprehensive analysis of home schooling litigation and of constitutional challenges to state compulsory attendance statutes. Recommendations for policymakers are provided, along with extensive chapter references and an index. (MLH)

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